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A National, Sane Labor Paper

True Confidence and Understanding Between Employer and Employee Absolutely Necessary to Industrial Peace.

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The Farmer and the Tariff

PROTECTION MEANS BETTER PRICES FOR FARMER, BETTER WAGES FOR LABOR AND GREATER CIRCULATION OF WEALTH

The agitation for lower tariffs that has its origin amongst the free trade farmers of Western Canada, shows that the matter of industrial protection for the Dominion has not been closely and carefully studied by low tariff advocates. Let us look for a moment at the position of the farmer; he is engaged in raising foodstuffs, the bulk of which is consumed by the people of Canada. It is obvious then that if everyone is employed they will be able to purchase the necessary foodstuffs required for family sustenance. In other words, if home industry is busy, the farmer is prosperous and if not then agriculture suffers. The policy in effect for this last four years has not meant any advantage to the Western farmer or for that matter to any farmer in Canada. In 1919 when the wheels of industry were busily employed and the country was being governed by a party whose guiding principle was adequate tariff protection, the Western farmer was receiving \$2.24 per bushel for wheat and bread to the consumer was cheaper than it is at present when wheat is selling at \$1.50 per bushel. It is good sound economic policy that to increase agricultural prosperity. Canadian industries must revive from the position they are in at present. An adequate tariff policy means a revival of Canadian industry and a revival of Canada's position in the world.

development of agriculture and prosperous farming conditions throughout the Dominion. It may be argued that higher tariffs would tend to create higher prices to the consumer an argument which is of very doubtful validity, but even if that happened, the farmers organizations can check any such tendency by seeing that publicity is given on the matter. Frankly however, we fail to see that slightly higher prices would be any disadvantage if the farmers were receiving more for their produce and the workman receiving more for his labor. Such a situation would be for better for all concerned than exists at the present time when the farmer is receiving less, the workman is receiving less and the consumer paying more. If industrial protection is thoroughly carried by a suitable tariff policy not the least individual to benefit by it would be the Canadian farmer.

Wage-Earning Occupations

A statistician, writing in The Monthly Labor Review, Washington, makes some surprising comparisons in the wage-earning occupations of the people of the United States. He is unable to bring his figures up to a later date than 1920, but possibly the ratio of changes has not altered greatly since then. The number of seasons per million of population in 1919 was 1,314, and the number of plasterers was 362, a decrease of about forty per cent. in thirty years. Structural steel workers number 178 per million, plumbers, 2,000; electricians, 2,014—all three showing remarkable increases in a decade. Trades that have fallen off are the woodworking crafts, wheelwrights, coopers, marble and stone cutters, and harness and saddle makers.

The automobile brought immense changes in wage-earning occupations. In 1910 the proportion of motor or truck drivers per million was 500, and the figure for 1920 is given as 2,637. In other words, more men are driving cars or trucks as a means of obtaining a living than are building houses. The motor car also is responsible for the huge increase in the metal working trades. Machinists number 7,586 per million of population. Stationary engineers and firemen are placed at 3,651. The number of clergymen, lawyers and carpenters remains about the same proportion as for years. Physicians have fallen off, and the number of dentists has increased fourfold in three decades.

Tells of Nova Scotia Conditions

Hamilton, Ont.—William Hayes, a member of the executive of District 26, United Mine Workers, gave the members of the Hamilton District Trades and Labor Council some first-hand information regarding conditions existing in the Nova Scotia coal fields as a result of the strike which started there early in March. Having started in the mines at the age of 13 and worked his way through the various groups, he is in a position to speak with authority on the hardships and hazards faced by the miners daily. These men, he said, are asked to accept a reduction of ten per cent. in wages which are now totally inadequate to provide a decent standard of living and bare necessities for the miners and their families.

Minimum Wage Act Rule Is Relaxed

Regina.—The apprenticeship period for girls and women employed in Saskatchewan stores and shops was raised from 18 months to two years at a meeting of the Saskatchewan Minimum Wage Board at the parliament buildings. The date on which the change is to become effective has not yet been set. The scale of minimum wages to be paid during the period of apprenticeship was also revised by the board to \$7.50 a week for first six months of the period, \$10 a week for the second six months, \$12 a week for the third six months, and \$13 a week for the final six months. After this the apprentice will be considered an experienced worker entitled to the full minimum wage of \$14 a week. The present scale for apprentices is \$7.50 a week for the first six months, \$9 a week for the next six months, and \$12 for the third and final six months.

Farmers Disagree on Amalgamation

Negotiations for amalgamation between the Farmers' Union and the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' association reached a deadlock at a conference held recently at Saskatoon, Sask., and the whole question will probably be submitted to the locals of both organizations before another conference is held. While the Farmers' Union held out for a Federal organization with provincial branches, the S.G.G.A. representatives declared in favor of the provincial unit affiliated with other provincial units.

Fewer Accidents

The total number of accidents involving compensation payment to injured workers for the first four months of 1924, in the classes included in the Industrial Accident Prevention Associations, of which the employers in Class 19 are members, was 4,422 and for the first four months of 1925, 3,664, a decrease of 758 accidents of a little over 17 per cent. Class 19, which comprises the printing and publishing trades and paper box manufacturers, shows a reduction of only about 5 per cent in compensated accidents when the two periods mentioned above are compared.

Rockwood Hard Hit by Tariff Lowering

Woolen Industry, Mainstay of Little Centre, Has to Give up Fight

Rockwood, Ont.—A typical illustration of the manner in which small Canadian communities are being crushed through the lack of a tariff policy which would retain the Canadian market for Canadian industries has been furnished at this centre through the closing down of the Harris Woolen Mills which were established in 1867, and which industry is now in the process of winding up business, preliminary to putting the lock upon the doors. From the standpoint of the village of Rockwood the closing of the sole industry is a serious blow. The centre has a population around 600, made up entirely of Canadian and British-born, as the village is able to make the boast that there is not a single foreign-born citizen within its limits. It is, in other words, a symbol of all that is best in the old-time Canadian life; and yet the village must face the financial shock of losing its one industrial undertaking which has been the economic backbone of Rockwood for upwards of half a century. The extent of the financial blow may be appreciated from the statement that until recently, when the pressure of overseas competition began to be felt by the Harris Woolen Mills, the industry had an annual payroll ranging from \$50,000 to \$60,000; and that sum, when poured into the life of a village of 600 people, is no small factor in contributing towards prosperity.

Forced to Close Doors

The Harris Woolen Mills are now in the process of cleaning up a few orders, and when that has been accomplished within a few days the lock will be placed upon the doors, and the picturesque valley of Rockwood, which has known its industry for so long will have joined the ranks of those other all-Canadian centres which have failed to progress as a symbol of Canadian life because the powers that be failed to appreciate their peculiar problems, or, if appreciating them, failed to prove that remedy which would enable the smaller Canadian centres to remain solid as a Canadian unit and work for the upbuilding of the nation. Until recently, the Harris Woolen Mills employed from sixty to seventy workers, during the Spring when the pressure of competition became too great, the number was reduced to thirty; and now even the last of the thirty are confronted with the problem of a workless future or a migration to the United States. As some of the men expressed themselves when the question was put to them, they do not want to go to the States, as their whole interests are in Canada, and particularly in Rockwood, but, so far as can be seen at present, all that remains to many of them is to pull up stakes, as so many other Canadians have been obliged to do in late years, and seek employment elsewhere.

A Shattering Blow

In a village the size of Rockwood, with 600 of a population, the working force runs somewhere under 150; and of that number, seventy have depended for years upon the employment furnished by the Harris Woolen Mills. Many of them are the heads of families who have lived in Rockwood for the whole of their lives, others are British-born who have been in Canada for many years, all had pinned their hopes and their future to Rockwood; so now, with the closing of the industry, the typically Canadian community is about to be shattered, homes are to be broken, and the migration must start for other centres. The one hope which remains is that the woolen mill plant can be sold to some other industry, but at present, according to the statement of Mr. William Harris, head of the organization, there is no such sale within sight. So far the closing of the plant is concerned, it can be traced to one thing, and that is the British preferential tariff which enables British woolen manufacturers to place cloth on the Canadian market at a figure which the Rockwood firm has been unable to meet.

"I haven't a thing to say against British goods coming to our markets," Mr. Harris remarked, in discussing the reasons why he had found it necessary to close the mills, "but it does not seem right to me that they should be permitted to enter the country at a price which the Canadian industry cannot meet. The tariff protection on our particular (Continued on page 3.)

Socialism and Imperial Preference

Rt. Hon. John Wheatley M.P. States His Case

"NOT A LEFT WING OF LIBERALISM"
(Interview in "Sunday Worker")

Eminent Financier Discusses Conditions in Britain

SIR CHARLES GORDON SAYS GROWING BELIEF IN OLD COUNTRY THAT PROTECTION WILL SOLVE INDUSTRIAL PROBLEM

Sir Charles Gordon, vice-president of the Bank of Montreal, and F. G. Daniels, general manager of the Dominion Textile Company, of which company Sir Charles is president, who has been on a business trip to England and the continent, returned to Montreal recently. In discussing trade conditions in England, Sir Charles, in an interview, stated that in what are known as the key or basic industries, business was very quiet, adding that this group includes coal mining, iron and steel, shipbuilding, cotton manufacturing and wool manufacturing. As a result of quiet times in these industries, the railroad earnings were also showing decreases. On the other hand, however, a great many other companies whose yearly statements were appearing from day to day were showing, said Sir Charles, without allowing it to many others.

He stated that business on the continent, especially in France, is improving and added that there seems to be little or no unemployment in France. In spite of this fact financial troubles continue, largely due to the fact that no government has yet been strong enough to insist on collection of taxes sufficient to balance the budget. It looks now, however, according to Sir Charles, as if a determined effort would be made to keep the franc at about the five-cent mark, but that no great effort will be made to improve the rate of exchange, adding that many would be opposed to such a move.

When questioned about the proposed venture of Dominion Textile into the rayon or artificial silk field, Sir Charles stated that there was nothing to say at the present time, but he did say that during the trip arrangements had been made for some additions to the plant of Dominion Textile, which he added should extend the company's operations. Regarding the cotton business, in which Sir Charles and Mr. Daniels were interested particularly, he pointed out that things are markedly quiet in a large section of the trade, such as the coarser and heavier makes, which formerly went to India, China, and the east. Many reasons, according to Sir Charles, such as high-priced raw materials and increasing overhead expenses, have been given for the falling off in this industry, but the real reason is that India, China and Japan and other countries have built their own mills and with low-priced labor, make it impossible for Lancashire to compete or to hope ever to regain the trade.

Talks of G.T. Securities The position of Grand Trunk securities is a matter about which a great deal is heard in England and Sir Charles makes it plain that whatever may be said about investors having to take their medicine when companies do not make good, there is a wide-spread feeling amongst those who held these securities in England that the fate of this great railroad was linked up with the Dominion of Canada, adding that many people who bought the securities at the time, provided capital to Canada at a low yield because they believed in the growth and importance of the country and that they felt a great road like the Grand Trunk, even though temporarily mismanaged, must eventually enjoy the prosperity which they felt would accrue to Canada.

According to Sir Charles the depression in the so-called key industries has led to an increase in the number of unemployed and this in turn has caused the government to take up the question of the safeguarding of the British industries, which means in effect that the government is studying the question of protection. In connection with this, the labor party is co-operating with the government and there seems no reason to doubt that within a short time some measure of protection will be granted certain industries. Whether it will be possible to deal with protection in a satisfactory manner is doubtful, said Sir Charles, as one business impinges upon another so closely that it is difficult to grant protection to certain industries

Manitoba Minimum Wage Changes

The Minimum Wage Board of Manitoba has issued new regulations governing the employment of girls in laundries and in dyeing and cleaning establishments. The new rules provide that experienced employees of eighteen years of age or over shall be paid a weekly wage of not less than \$12, which is \$1 increase over the present rate. Inexperienced employees are to be paid not less than \$9 for the first six months, and not less than \$10.50 for the second six months, after which they are to be classed as experienced. Two changes occur in this provision—an increase of 50 cents per week for the second half-year and the elimination of the class "minor inexperienced employees." The latter under present regulations receives a minimum of \$8 per week, which by the abolition of this classification becomes \$9. Two conditions governing the hours of labor for these workers are added. One provides that there shall be a period of not less than eleven hours between the close of one day's work and the beginning of the next. Another rule provides for a minimum of one hour for lunch. The new regulations became effective on June 1st.

Slump in Membership

Almost alone among the trades unions of Europe in these past years of business slump and falling union membership, Sweden's trade unions report an increase for last year of over 15 per cent additional members. Metal workers and forestry workers show the greatest increase; general workers and paper workers next. Thirty-one thousand of Sweden's 360,000 unionists are women.

London, Eng.—"The essential thing in Labor politics is to keep a grip of the realities of the modern world. It may be very nice to list a series of idealistic abstractions, but these cut no ice as far as the immediate needs of the workers of this country, or the Movement, are concerned.

"We may deplore the fact that the British Empire is not what we would like it to be. But there it is, and there it remains, whatever you think of it. Our duty as members of the Labor Movement is to see how we can utilize it to serve our purpose, and to help, at the same time, the world position of the workers.

"As Socialists we are out to secure an international unity of peoples. Within the British Empire we have a nucleus of unity. It is for this reason that I am opposed to any policy of wrecking it.

"Supposing we set on foot an agitation to smash the empire and 'liberate' each unit, what would happen? We would only succeed in letting loose a series of units that would add to the present welter of international antagonisms. Such a policy is sheer liberalism and has not the remotest relation to international and uniting Socialism. Liberalism stands for industrial competition not only among persons but among nations. It views the individual, like the nation, as free units, whose best interests are served by competition. This leads, and can only lead to anti-social ends—to man against man, nation against nation.


Transforming the Empire "Economic development has replied to liberalism, and has killed it—first industrially, and later politically. The era of free competition is past. We are now in a period of mighty combinations of trustified capital and groups of people are massed under the control of mighty imperial States. Our job as Socialists is to transform the trusts into organs of the community under a Socialist State. We must apply the same method to the empire, and transpose it into a nucleus which will form the basis of an international pact against international capitalism.

"But," I interposed, "is the empire a Unity? Is it not an elementary fact of geography, as any map can testify, that the British Empire is a series of remnants scattered all over the world?"

"They may be scattered," said Wheatley, "in the geographical sense, but economically the units are bound into a cohesive whole. Economic forces such as transport, telegraphy, etc., have triumphed over the seemingly geographical disability."

"Surely," I interjected, "if any country is able to combine the modern economic and geographical situation it is America and not Britain. The British Isles lie on the fringe of Europe, but America, situated with the Atlantic on one side (Continued on page 3.)

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